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Atty. Dkt. No. 016907-1149

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

Applicant: Takamitsu SHIMADA et al.

Title: IMAGE OUTPUT SYSTEM AND
IMAGE OUTPUT METHOD

Appl. No.: 09/665,173

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Filing Date: 09/19/2000

MAR 28 2003

Examiner: Unassigned

Technology Center 2600

Art Unit: 2622

INFORMATION DISCLOSURE STATEMENT
UNDER 37 CFR §1.56

Commissioner for Patents
Washington, D.C. 20231

Sir:

Submitted herewith on Form PTO/SB/08 is a listing of a document known to Applicants in order to comply with Applicants' duty of disclosure pursuant to 37 CFR §1.56. A copy of each listed document is being submitted to comply with the provisions of 37 CFR §1.97 and §1.98.

The submission of any document herewith, which is not a statutory bar, is not intended as an admission that such document constitutes prior art against the claims of the present application or that such document is considered material to patentability as defined in 37 CFR §1.56(b). Applicants do not waive any rights to take any action which would be appropriate to antedate or otherwise remove as a competent reference any document which is determined to be a *prima facie* art reference against the claims of the present application.



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TIMING OF THE DISCLOSURE

The listed document is being submitted in compliance with 37 CFR §1.97(b), before the mailing date of the first Office Action on the merits, and within three (3) months of the mailing date of the foreign office action

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RELEVANCE OF EACH DOCUMENT

Technology Center 2600

The foregoing document was cited by the examiner in Applicants' corresponding Japanese application. According to an English translation of the Japanese Patent Office office action, document A1 discloses an image outputting method for outputting images by means of a master unit and at least two slave units comprising:

- a step of instructing the outputting of images of a plurality of sets of documents;
- a first dividing step of assigning the images among the plurality of units in accordance with the contents of the images which have been instructed to be output;
- a second dividing step of, when any of the units has finished outputting the image divided in the first dividing step and a yet-to-be output image exists in the remaining unit(s), re-assigning the yet-to-be output image.

As noted, the characterizations of the Japanese Patent Office noted above are based on an English translation obtained by Applicant's representative. The disclosure of these characterizations should not be construed as an admission of or agreement to the opinions expressed in the Japanese Office Action.

An English translation of the foreign-language document is not readily available. However, the absence of such translation does not relieve the PTO from its duty to consider the submitted foreign language document (37 CFR §1.98 and MPEP §609). An English language abstract is provided herewith.

STATEMENT

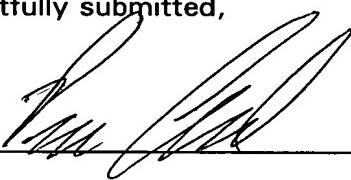
The undersigned hereby states in accordance with 37 C.F.R. §1.97(e)(1) that each item of information contained in this information disclosure statement was first cited in any communication from a foreign patent office in a counterpart foreign application not more than three (3) months prior to filing of this Statement.

Applicants respectfully request that any listed document be considered by the Examiner and be made of record in the present application and that an initialed copy of Form PTO/SB/08 be returned in accordance with MPEP §609.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any additional fees which may be required regarding this application under 37 CFR §§ 1.16-1.17, or credit any overpayment, to Deposit Account No. 19-0741. Should no proper payment be enclosed herewith, as by a check being in the wrong amount, unsigned, post-dated, otherwise improper or informal or even entirely missing, the Commissioner is authorized to charge the unpaid amount to Deposit Account No. 19-0741.

Respectfully submitted,

By _____



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Date March 27, 2003

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